

## 2005 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

<b>April 12-15</b>	<b>AchemAmerica 2005</b> Mexico City, Mexico Web: <a href="http://www.achemamerica.de">www.achemamerica.de</a>
<b>April 24-26</b>	<b>GAWDA University SMC</b> Dallas, Texas Web: <a href="http://www.gawda.org">www.gawda.org</a>
<b>April 26-28</b>	<b>AWS Welding Show/GAWDA Pavillion</b> Dallas, Texas Web: <a href="http://www.aws.org">www.aws.org</a>
<b>June 1-3</b>	<b>GAWDA University SMC</b> Hilton Hotel, New York, NY Web: <a href="http://www.gawda.org">www.gawda.org</a>
<b>July 11-15</b>	<b>SEMICON West</b> Moscone Center, San Francisco, CA Web: <a href="http://www.semi.org">www.semi.org</a>
<b>September 12-17</b>	<b>International Essen Welding Fair</b> Essen, Germany Web: <a href="http://www.messe-essen.de">www.messe-essen.de</a>
<b>September 20-24</b>	<b>GAWDA 61st Annual Convention</b> Grand Wailea Spa & Hotel - Maui, HI Web: <a href="http://www.gawda.org">www.gawda.org</a>
<b>October 18-20</b>	<b>Medtrade 2005</b> Atlanta, Georgia Web: <a href="http://www.medtrade.com">www.medtrade.com</a>
<b>October 22-26</b>	<b>International Oxygen Manufacturers Association (IOMA)</b> Hong Kong, Peoples Republic of China Web: <a href="http://www.iomaweb.org">www.iomaweb.org</a>
<b>November 13-16</b>	<b>AWS — FABTECH</b> McCormick Place, Chicago Web: <a href="http://www.aws.org">www.aws.org</a>

Send your Calendar Items to [Editors@cryogas.com](mailto:Editors@cryogas.com)

## Art of Selling...

by Art Waskey

### The "Unpaid" Consultant

A frustrated sales rep came to me recently with this account dilemma, "I gave the customer all the information and showed him which (welding) machine to buy, but he just told me, 'I purchased it from your competitor!'"



Does that story have a familiar ring? In the industry we call it "unpaid" consulting. We have all experienced this situation before, so consider some basic prevention guidelines.

When I asked the rep additional debriefing questions, he shared with me that his competitor already had the customer's *gas business*. In our industry, "having" the *gas business* is paramount to being the one with the relationship. Since gas is the bread and butter—higher profit, high-touch part, the business typically goes to the supplier that has established a relationship of trust.

The Marketing Manager for one of our suppliers recently asked me, "How do I decide WHO to give a sales lead to when I have three comparable distributors in one market?"

Of course, my initial response was, "Use us!!!" But since he respected me enough to ask my advice, we discussed the criteria for selecting the appropriate distributor.

See if my suggestions to this vendor Marketing Manager help you as a sales person avoid becoming the "unpaid" consultant again.

1. Make an initial sales call to the prospect to determine which distributor is selling gas to the account.

2. Determine which distributor has the strongest technical capability. How critical is technical expertise to the prospect in his selection process?

3. If the prospect's current supplier is not technically competent, but still prefers to buy product through them, offer a finder's fee. The vendor will have to support this account with service.

4. If the customer has NO apparent particular distributor preference, ask your field representative which distributor is best qualified to build rapport and render service.

The rep in my opening story would have been much better served by building a relationship before presenting a premature solution to the customer's technical problem. Garry Duncan, a Denver consultant, and President of Leadership Connections, advises, "Customers don't buy a proposal, they buy *YOU!!!*"

The next time you are asked to analyze a prospect's problem, avoid being the "unpaid" consultant. Start by developing a strong relationship. Then establish a mutual agreement. Don't hesitate to ask the question, "If I can bring a solution to the table, would you buy the product / service from me?" Only then should you demonstrate the solution!!!

*Art Waskey is currently Vice President of Sales & Marketing for General Air Service and Supply Company in Denver, Colorado. He is also a sales consultant, motivational speaker, and Distinguished Toastmaster. He can be reached via e-mail at [awaskey@generalair.com](mailto:awaskey@generalair.com) or his business website [www.impactspeakingdynamics.com](http://www.impactspeakingdynamics.com).*